

## Message Text

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44

ACTION CU-04

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 AID-05 VO-03 /023 W

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R 031210Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7093

INFO USIA WASHDC

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 2023

USIA FOR INA

DEPT PLS PASS AID

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OEXC, SY

SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL VISITOR NOMINATION

REF: STATE A-8585

### 1. NOMINATION-JUSTIFICATION:

(A) NAME: MR. SOUHBI KAHALE; KAHALE (KAH 'HAH' LAY) IS  
SURNAME

(B) PRESENT POSITION: MINISTER OF EUPHRATES DAM  
PAST POSITION: 1962- MINISTER OF PLANNING; 1962-3  
MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS; 1964 - ARB LEAGUE DIRECTOR  
GENERAL FOR DIVERSION OF JORDAN RIVER PROJECT; 1967-  
PRESIDENT OF PAN-ARAB ENGINEERING FEDERATIONS; 1968-  
DIRECTOR OF ORGANIZATION FOR CONSTRUCTION OF EUPHRATES  
DAM; 1974- MINISTER OF EUPHRATES DAM.

(C) BORN 1919 IN SYRIA. SYRIAN CITIZEN.

(D) TRAVELED TO US IN 1934 TO OBTAIN MASTERS DEGREE.  
TRAVELED IN EUROPE, ASIA AND MIDDLE EAST EXTENSIVELY  
ON PRIVATE AND GOVERNMENT BUSINESS.

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(E) NO PREVIOUS USG GRANT.

(F) ESCORT REQUIRED. NO INTERPRETER NECESSARY. KAHALE WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY AIDE WHO WILL BE NOMINATED WHEN SELECTED.

(G) NO VISA PROBLEMS ANTICIPATED.

(H) MINISTRY OF EUPHRATES DAM HAS VERY HIGH PRIORITY IN OBTAINING SARG FUNDS AND SUPPORT. AS HEAD OF MINISTRY AND AS DISTINGUISHED TECHNOCRAT KAHALE HAS STRONG VOICE IN FURTUR SYRIAN ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT. WITHIN HIS MINISTRY, KAHALE MAKES ALL IMPORTANT DECISIONS AND IS CONSIDERED TO BE TOUGH AND HIGHLY QUALIFIED LEADER. HE WILL BE INVOLVED WITH SERVERAL USAID PROJECTS.

(I) DATES: MAY OR JUNE. CURRENT ESTIMATE IS JUNE 20, DEPARTURE. FOUR WEEK VISIT. KAHALE WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY TOP AIDE WHO WILL BE NOMINATED AS SOON AS HE IS SELECTED. KAHALE IS ALSO CONSIDERING BRINGING HIS WIFE AT OWN EXPENSE.

## 2. BIOGRAPHIC DATA FOR PROGRAMMING:

(A) NAME: MR. SOBHI KAHALE, KAHLE IS SURNAME. TITLE: MINISTER OF EUPHRATES DAM. OFFICIALLY ADDRESSED AS YOUR EXCELLENCY, BUT IS NOT PROTOCOL CONSCIOUS.

(B) PRESENT POSITION SINCE 1974- MINISTER OF EUPHRATES DAM. PAST POSITIONS:: PRIOR TO 1962 HE WORKED AS ENGINEER AND CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTOR IN SYRIA, JORDAN AND SAUDI ARABIA. 1962--MINISTER OF PLANNING; 1962-3- MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS; 1964-ARAB LEAGUE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF AUTHORITY FOR DIVERSION OF JORDAN RIVER PROJECT:V 1976--PRESIDENT OF PAN-ARAB ENGINEERING FEDERATION; 1968-DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR CONSTRUCTION OF EUPHRATES DAM.

(C) BORN 1919 IN SYRIA. SYRIAN CITIZEN. MALE. MARRIED WITH TWO CHILDREN, BOTH MARRIED. ADDRESS: MINISTRY OF EUPHRATES DAM, MALKI ST., DAMASCUS, SAR. EMERGENCY ADDRESS SAME AS ABOVE. OTHER RELEVANT PERSONAL DATA: UNCLASSIFIED

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MR. KAHALE IS DIABETIC AND REQUIRES SPECIAL DIET, BUT WILL BRING OWN MEDICATION. (KAHLE IS ACTIVE AND VIGOROUS. EMBASSY DOES NOT ANTICIPATE DIFFICULTIES DUE TO AGE OR HEALTH). DOES NOT DRINK ALCHOHOLIC BEVERAGES, BUT HAS NO OBJECTION TO OTHER DOING SO. EDUCATION: BA, ROBERT COLLEGE, ISTANBUL, 1933. MS, CIVIL ENGINEERING, UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-1934. MEMBER UNTIL 1956 OF AMERICAN SOCIETY OF CIVIL ENGINEERS.

PRESIDENT FOR MANY YEARS OF DAMASCUS FINE ARTS SOCIETY.  
HAS PUBLISHED NUMEROUS ARTICLES IN ARABIC.  
TRAVEL: TO US IN 1933 FOR GRADUATE STUDY. HAS  
TRAVELED IN EUROPE, ASIA AND MIDDLE EAST ON PRIVATE AND  
GOVERNMENT BUSINESS.

(D) KNOWLEDGE OF ENGLISH-EXCELLENT IN ALL CATEGORIES.

(E) OTHER LANGUAGES-ARABIC EXCELLENT IN ALL CATEGORIES;  
ALSO HAS SOME FRENCH, TURKISH AND RUSSIAN.

(F) PROGRAM INFORMATION:

(1) PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS: MULTIPURPOSE WATER USE,  
WATER CONTROL; LAND RECLAMATION; HYDROELECTRIC  
POWER. SPECIAL PROBLEMS FACED BY KAHALE'S MINISTRY  
ARE GYPSEFEROUS SOIL PROBLEMS, SOIL SALINITY PROBLEMS,  
IRRIGATION (CONSTRUCTION ASPECTS) AND LAND RECLAMATION.

(2) BUSINESS INTERESTS: SAME AS ABOVE.

(3) KAHALE WOULD LIKE TO INCLUDE VISIT TO ALMA MATER,  
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS, URBANA, AND WEEKEND STOP  
IN SANTA CLARA, CALIF. TO VISIT HIS WIFE'S DAUGHTER.  
HE WOULD ALSO LIKE OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE MEDICAL  
EXAMINATION, BUT UNDERSTANDS THIS MAY NOT BE POSSIBLE.  
MUSEUM VISITS AND SIGHTSEEING SHOULD NOT BE PLANNED  
TO DETRIMENT OF BUSINESS PROGRAM, BUT OPTION SHOULD  
BE AVAILABLE IF FREE TIME PERMITS.

(4) POSTS SUGGESTIONS FOR PROGRAM: KAHALE SHOULD VISIT  
TVA AND PERHAPS BOULDER OR OTHER COLORADO RIVER DAMS.  
USAID OFFICERS SUGGEST UTAH STATE FOR SOIL SALINITY AND  
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IRRIGATION; UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA AT RIVERSIDE FOR SALINITY  
AND SUBTROPICAL AGRICULTURE AND US SALINITY LABORATORY  
NEAR SACRAMENTO.

(5) DATES: MAY OR JUNE FOR FOUR WEEKS. CURRENT ESTIMATE  
IS JUNE 20, DEPARTURE, BUT THIS NOT YET DEFINITE.  
KAHALE WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY TOP AIDE, WHO WILL BE  
NOMINATED AT LATER DATE, AND IS CONSIDERING BRINGING HIS  
WIFE AT OWN EXPENSE.  
MURPHY

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## Message Attributes

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